

Rec^d. Jan. 1/76



Rev. Samuel May,

Leicester,

Mass.

Ms. Acc. 2705 (30)



the value of the accounts

Roxbury, Dec. 31, 1875.

Dear friend May:

It is too late to wish you "a merry Christmas," but not to invoke for you and yours "a happy New Year." May it indeed prove to you all the happiest of the whole series yet experienced by you.

We had a very pleasant observance of Christmas Eve, under our own roof. True to the German custom, Mr. Villard caused a tall and shapely evergreen tree to be erected in our parlor, whereon were hung many beautiful ornaments and pretty gifts for our dear grandchildren—six of the eleven having been present, to behold with wondering eyes and joyous spirits the really brilliant spectacle. Several of our friends and neighbors were with us on the occasion, and congratulations and kind wishes were most abundant. To-morrow evening we shall

cause the tree to be again illuminated, as inaugurating the centennial year.

Your letter of the 29th has just come to hand, acknowledging the receipt of the volume of Whittier's Poetical Selections, which I left for you at Mrs. Boardman's. As it was uncertain whether you had already obtained a copy, I took the precaution to inscribe your name with my own on an accompanying slip of paper, which, if not lost, you may affix to one of the blank leaves.

I was quite sure that you would be pleased with the volume, alike in regard to its literary taste and poetic discrimination. Your warm eulogium is an exact expression of my estimate of it. I should have omitted some pieces in the closing portion, and substituted others more worthy (in my judgment) of a place in such a collection; but, as a whole, it is certainly admirable, and worthy a place in every household.

In addition to this compilation are those by Bryant and Dana, and the "⁽¹⁰⁰⁰⁾10001 Gems" by Charles Mackay; each having its own distinctive features, and the whole making a copious library of the choicest poetry from the days of Chaucer to our own.

For several years I have had a strong desire to make an additional compilation, ~~covering~~ covering a very different field of thought and sentiment; and, having secured the materials, nothing but the pecuniary risk has deterred me from publishing the same. Its title would probably be, "Poems of Freedom, Philanthropy, Reform, and Progress"—the inspirational efforts of the best poets on both sides of the Atlantic, such as would serve to stimulate and strengthen in the future all the struggling friends of humanity and liberty, and such as might readily be referred to at any moment by those desiring of choice and pertinent extracts. A cen-

ennial year would be a particularly appropriate one for the appearance of such a volume. I cannot but regard it as somewhat singular that so few poems, of the kind I have referred to, are to be found in any of the compilations already named. Even Whittier has almost wholly omitted them; and yet very many of them deserve to be printed in letters of gold, and perpetuated for the quickening of the centuries to come.

My dear friend, the few slight tokens of my regard for you are scarcely worth your reference. You have placed me and mine under life-long obligations, and in no way can we adequately express the gratitude we feel.

I was extremely sorry not to be at home when you and your beloved daughter called at my house, as you may readily suppose.

Ever truly yours, Wm. Lloyd Garrison.